AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended): A privacy protection method for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

an identifier guard step of bringing an proper identifier of a radio identifier transmitter affixed to an article purchased and thereby possessed by a personal user into an identifier guard state not readable by a stranger according to the intention of said personal user;

an identifier generation step of generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader with a privacy protection identifier transmitter possessed by said personal user;

a transmission step of transmitting said identifier generated through said identifier generation step from said privacy protection identifier transmitter when receiving an identifier transmission request; and

a reading step of rendering the identifier of said radio identifier transmitter in the identifier guard state readable according to the intension of the personal user, wherein

said identifier generation step includes a variable type identifier generation step capable of generating an identifier different from a precedently transmitted identifier; and

said transmission step transmits the same identifier as a precedently transmitted identifier when receiving an identifier transmission request again within a prescribed time from precedent identifier transmission.

2. (Original): A privacy protection method for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier of a radio identifier transmitter affixed to an article purchased and thereby possessed by a personal user and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

an identifier generation step of generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader with a privacy protection identifier transmitter possessed by said personal user; and

a transmission step of transmitting said identifier generated through said identifier generation step from said privacy protection identifier transmitter when receiving an identifier transmission request, wherein

said identifier generation step includes an adjusted identifier generation step for generating an adjusted identifier so adjusted that an identifier transmitted from said personal user possessing said privacy protection identifier transmitter is identical to an identifier transmitted from a stranger in response to the identifier transmission request,

for causing such a different person identical identifier transmission phenomenon that identical identifiers are transmitted even in case of transmission from different persons.

3. (Currently Amended) A privacy protection method for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

a provision step of providing privacy protection identifier transmitters to a plurality of personal users, wherein

said privacy protection identifier transmitters include:

an identifier generation ~~means~~ unit generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader; and

a transmission ~~means~~ unit transmitting said identifier generated by said identifier generation ~~means~~ unit when receiving an identifier transmission request,

said identifier generation ~~means~~ unit includes a variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ unit capable of generating an identifier different from a precedently transmitted identifier,

said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ unit is capable of generating a common identifier according with an identifier transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter possessed by a person different from persons possessing said privacy protection identifier transmitters generating and transmitting identifiers with said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ unit,

said plurality of privacy protection identifier transmitters are classified into a plurality of groups formed by privacy protection identifier transmitters transmitting said common identifier in a higher frequency as compared with an identifier of a stranger and having said common identifier varying with groups, and

said provision step specifies an area every said group and provides said privacy protection identifier transmitters belonging to said group to the personal users.

4. (Currently Amended): A privacy protection method for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

a provision step of providing a privacy protection identifier transmitter to a plurality of personal users, wherein

said privacy protection identifier transmitter includes:

an identifier generation ~~means~~ unit generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader, and

4

a transmission ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> transmitting said identifier generated by said identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> when receiving an identifier transmission request,

said identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> includes <u>a</u> variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> capable of generating an identifier different from a precedently transmitted identifier, and

said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> is capable of generating a common identifier according with an identifier transmitted from a privacy protection identifier transmitter possessed by a person different from a person possessing the privacy protection identifier transmitter generating the identifier with said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u>,

for simultaneously transmitting a previously set prescribed number of identifiers from a privacy protection transmitter provided to a certain personal user through said provision step, and

simultaneously transmitting a plurality of identifiers of a number larger than said prescribed number from a privacy protection identifier transmitter provided to another personal user different from said certain personal user through said provision step and generating another identifier, excluding said prescribed number of identifiers, included in said plurality of identifiers as said common identifier.

5. (Currently Amended): A device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

<u>a</u> variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u>, which is ~~means~~ <u>a unit</u> disturbing a privacy invader and generating an identifier for privacy protection, capable of generating an identifier different from a precedently transmitted identifier; and

<u>a</u> transmission ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> transmitting an identifier generated by said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> when receiving an identifier transmission request<u>, wherein</u>

<u>said transmission unit transmits the same identifier as a precedently transmitted identifier when receiving an identifier transmission request again within a prescribed time from precedent identifier transmission.</u>

6. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to claim 5, wherein

said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> generates said identifier in the range of identifiers transmitted by the respective ones of radio identifier transmitters affixed to the respective ones of already sold articles.

7-8. (Cancelled).

9. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to claim [[8]] <u>48</u>, further including <u>a</u> communication ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> communicating with a privacy protection identifier transmitter of a stranger, wherein

said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> includes <u>an</u> identifier storage ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> storing an identifier,

said communication ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> includes:

<u>a</u> transmission ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> communicating with said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger and transmitting said identifier stored in said identifier storage ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> to said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger,

a receiving ~~means~~ unit receiving an identifier transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger, and

a shared identifier storage ~~means~~ unit storing the identifier received by said receiving ~~means~~ unit in said identifier storage ~~means~~ unit and sharing the same identifier with said stranger, and

said ~~variable type~~ adjusted identifier generation ~~means~~ unit generates said identifier adjusted to accord with the identifier transmitted from the stranger by reading the shared identifier stored in said identifier storage ~~means~~ unit through said shared identifier storage ~~means~~ unit when receiving an identifier transmission request,

for causing such a different person identical identifier transmission phenomenon that identical identifiers are transmitted even in case of transmission from different persons by transmitting said adjusted identifier from mutual privacy protection identifier transmitters in which information of said identifiers is exchanged.

10. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to claim 9, wherein

said communication ~~means~~ unit, whose communicable communication limit range for transmitting/receiving and exchanging mutual identifiers is set within 20 meters, communicates with the privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger entering the area of said communicable communication limit range and exchanges mutual identifiers with each other.

11. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to claim 9, wherein

said communication ~~means~~ unit has an inhibition ~~means~~ unit inhibiting performance of

exchange of said identifiers with the privacy protection identifier transmitter of a stranger with

whom communication has been already made for transmitting/receiving and exchanging said

identifiers again within a prescribed period.

12. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection

according to ~~claim 9~~ any of claims 9 to 11, wherein

said communication ~~means~~ unit has a telephone function and exchanges mutual identifiers

with the privacy protection identifier transmitter of a stranger making communication by telephone,

and

said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ unit generates an identifier adjusted to accord

with an identifier transmitted from said stranger by reading an exchanged identifier stored in said

identifier storage ~~means~~ unit when receiving an identifier transmission request.

13. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection

according to ~~claim 9~~ any of claims 9 to 11, wherein

said communication ~~means~~ unit has an electronic mail function, transmits an identifier stored

in said identifier storage ~~means~~ unit to the privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger

along with transmission of an electronic mail, and receives an identifier transmitted from the

privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger along with receiving of an electronic mail

and stores the same in said identifier storage ~~means~~ unit, and

said ~~variable type~~ adjusted identifier generation ~~means~~ unit generates an identifier adjusted

to accord with the identifier transmitted from said stranger by reading the identifier, transmitted

8

from the privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger, stored in said identifier storage

~~means~~ unit when receiving an identifier transmission request.

14. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection

according to claim 5 or 6, wherein

said transmission ~~means~~ unit is capable of simultaneously transmitting a plurality of

identifiers of a number larger than a prescribed number of identifiers simultaneously transmitted

from the privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger, and

said variable type identifier generation ~~means~~ unit generates an identifier, excluding said

prescribed number of identifiers, included in said plurality of identifiers as said common identifier.

15. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection

according to ~~claim 5~~ any of claims 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 47 and 48, further including:

an identifier guard ~~means~~ unit bringing an proper identifier of a radio identifier transmitter

affixed to an article purchased and thereby possessed by a personal user into an identifier guard

state not readable by a stranger according to the intention of said personal user, and

a read ~~means~~ unit rendering the identifier of said radio identifier transmitter in the identifier

guard state readable according to the intention of the personal user.

16. (Currently Amended): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection

according to claim 15, wherein

said identifier guard ~~means~~ unit transmits proper identification information for person in

question authentication, lets said radio identifier transmitter authenticate the same and switches to

an identifier transmission stop state transmitting no identifier unless the person in question is confirmable, and

said read ~~means~~ unit brings an identifier into a transmittable state after transmitting said proper identification information and making said radio identifier transmitter perform the person in question authentication.

17-29. (Cancelled).

30. (Currently Amended): The storage medium storing a program according to claim [[27]] 54, ~~exchanging mutual identifiers with a privacy protection identifier transmitter of a stranger making communication by telephone~~, wherein

said adjusted identifier generation means includes identifier storage means storing an identifier,

for communicating with said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger and making said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger transmit said identifier stored in said identifier storage means while receiving the identifier transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger and making said identifier storage means store the same for sharing the same identifier as said stranger, and

said ~~variable type~~ adjusted identifier generation means generates an identifier adjusted to accord with [[an]] said identifier transmitted from [[said]] the stranger by reading ~~an exchanged~~ said shared identifier stored in said identifier storage means when receiving an identifier transmission request.

31-46. (Cancelled).

47. (New): A device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier of a radio identifier transmitter affixed to an article purchased and thereby possessed by a personal user and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

an identifier generation unit generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader; and

a transmission unit transmitting said identifier generated by said identifier generation unit when receiving an identifier transmission request, wherein

said identifier generation unit includes an adjusted identifier generation unit for generating an adjusted identifier so adjusted that an identifier transmitted from said personal user possessing said privacy protection identifier transmitter is identical to an identifier transmitted from a stranger by communicating with a privacy protection identifier transmitter of said stranger and exchanging information of mutual identifiers, and

said transmission unit transmits the adjusted identifier generated by said adjusted identifier generation unit.

48. (New): A device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier of a radio identifier transmitter affixed to an article purchased and thereby possessed by a personal user and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

an identifier generation unit generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader; and

a transmission unit transmitting said identifier generated by said identifier generation unit when receiving an identifier transmission request, wherein

said identifier generation unit includes an adjusted identifier generation unit for generating an adjusted identifier so adjusted that an identifier transmitted from said personal user possessing said privacy protection identifier transmitter is identical to an identifier transmitted from a stranger, and,

said transmission unit transmits the adjusted identifier generated by said adjusted identifier generation unit.

49. (New): A device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection for preventing an invasion of privacy performed by reading an proper identifier of a radio identifier transmitter affixed to an article purchased and thereby possessed by a personal user and on the basis of said proper identifier, including:

a memory; and

a processor operating in accordance with a program stored in said memory, wherein

said processor executes:

processing of generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader; and

processing of transmitting said identifier generated through said processing of generating the identifier when receiving an identifier transmission request, wherein

said processing of generating the identifier includes adjusted identifier generation processing for generating an adjusted identifier so adjusted that an identifier transmitted from said personal user possessing said privacy protection identifier transmitter is identical to an identifier transmitted from a stranger, and

said processing of transmitting said identifier transmits the adjusted identifier generated

through said adjusted identifier generation processing.

50. (New): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to

claim 49, wherein

said adjusted identifier generation processing includes identifier storage processing of

storing an identifier in said memory, for communicating with said privacy protection identifier

transmitter of the stranger and making said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger

transmit said identifier stored in said memory while receiving the identifier transmitted from said

privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger and making said memory store the same

through said identifier storage processing for sharing the same identifier as said stranger, and

said adjusted identifier generation processing generates an identifier adjusted to accord with

said identifier transmitted from the stranger by reading said shared identifier stored in said memory

when receiving an identifier transmission request.

51. (New): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to

claim 50, wherein

said processor executes communication processing of communicating with a privacy

protection identifier transmitter of a stranger, wherein

said communication processing includes:

transmission processing of communicating with said privacy protection identifier transmitter

and transmitting said identifier stored in said memory through said identifier storage processing to

said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger;

receiving processing of receiving an identifier transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger; and

shared identifier storage processing of storing the identifier received through said receiving processing in said memory and sharing the same identifier with said stranger, and

said adjusted identifier generation processing generates said identifier adjusted to accord with the identifier transmitted from the stranger by reading the shared identifier stored in said memory through said shared identifier storage processing when receiving an identifier transmission request.

52. (New): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to claim 51, wherein

said communication processing exchanges mutual identifiers with the privacy protection identifier transmitter of a stranger making communication by telephone employing a telephone function, and

said adjusted identifier generation processing generates an identifier adjusted to accord with an identifier transmitted from said stranger by reading an exchanged identifier stored in said memory when receiving an identifier transmission request.

53. (New): The device for transmitting an identifier for privacy protection according to claim 51 or 52, wherein

said communication processing transmits an identifier stored in said memory through identifier storage processing to the privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger along with transmission of an electronic mail employing an electronic mail function, and receives an

identifier transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger along with

receiving of an electronic mail and stores the same in said memory, and

said adjusted identifier generation processing generates an identifier adjusted to accord with

the identifier transmitted from said stranger by reading the identifier, transmitted from said privacy

protection identifier transmitter of the stranger, stored in said memory when receiving an identifier

transmission request.

54. (New): A storage medium storing a program for preventing an invasion of privacy

performed by reading an proper identifier and on the basis of said proper identifier,

for making a computer provided on a privacy protection identifier transmitter function as:

identifier generation means generating an identifier for disturbing a privacy invader; and

transmission means transmitting said identifier generated by said identifier generation means

when receiving an identifier transmission request, wherein

said identifier generation means includes adjusted identifier generation means for generating

an adjusted identifier so adjusted that an identifier transmitted from said personal user possessing

said privacy protection identifier transmitter is identical to an identifier transmitted from a stranger,

for making the computer function so that the adjusted identifier generated by said adjusted

identifier generation means is transmitted by said transmission means.

55. (New): The storage medium storing a program according to claim 30, further storing a

program for making the computer function as communication means communicating with a privacy

protection identifier transmitter of a stranger, wherein

said adjusted identifier generation means includes identifier storage means storing an identifier,

said communication means includes:

transmission means communicating with said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger and transmitting said identifier stored in said identifier storage means to said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger;

receiving means receiving an identifier transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger; and

shared identifier storage means storing the identifier received by said receiving means in said identifier storage means and sharing the same identifier with said stranger, and

said adjusted identifier generation means generates a identifier an identifier adjusted to accord with the identifier transmitted from said stranger by reading the shared identifier stored in said identifier storage means through said shared identifier storage means when receiving an identifier transmission request.

56. (New): The storage medium storing a program according to claim 55, wherein

said communication means has a telephone function and exchanges mutual identifiers with a privacy protection identifier transmitter of a stranger making communication y telephone, and

said adjusted identifier generation means generates an identifier adjusted to accord with an identifier transmitted from said stranger by reading an exchanged identifier stored in said identifier storage means when receiving an identifier transmission request.

57. (New): The storage medium storing a program according to claim 55 or 56, wherein

said communication means has an electronic mail function, transmits an identifier stored in said identifier storage means to the privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger along with transmission of an electronic mail, and receives an identifier transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger along with receiving of an electronic mail and stores the same in said identifier storage means, and

said adjusted identifier generation means generates an identifier adjusted to accord with the identifier transmitted from said stranger by reading the identifier, transmitted from said privacy protection identifier transmitter of the stranger, stored in said identifier storage means when receiving an identifier transmission request.